How to / Trackmania / Mediatracker / FX Color effect

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Introduction

Trackmania offers a special effect in order to manipulate the complete colour layout of what is shown on your screen... fortunately, these effects are relatively easy to handle.

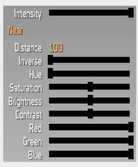
Necessary Trackmania settings

CLICK IMAGE TO ZOOM

In order to display Color effects, Trackmania needs the "**Postprocess FXs**" setting activated in the config launcher and the shader model must be **PC2** or higher.

Without this setting, any *Color* effects won't show while playing the Mediatracker content.

FX Color settings



Colour manipulation values

In fact, a lot of you people know these settings from your graphic painting software.

Note, that Trackmania will automatically create transitions between 2 keyframes, if the values in the keyframes are different.

Intensity

Determines, how much the chosen color effect will be visible, slider goes from *none* (left) to *full* (right).

HSB : Hue, Saturation, Brightness

Usually, any color you know can be described by these 3 attributes. Within Trackmania, these settings are used to manipulate the outlook of the existing colours.

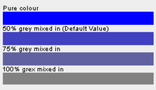
Hue is the *base color tone*
If this value is changed with the slider, it means that *all colours* will be moved along the standard "color wheel".

For more clearness, the 360° colour wheel is displayed as a bar on the right.

Saturation describes the purity of a colour.
When beeing manipulated, it is "mixed" with grey color.

Slider left: 100% grey mixed in.
Slider right: 0% grey mixed in.

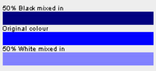
The default value is 50% to keep the colours "eye friendly"...



Brightness describes how light or dark the colour will be...

Slider left: 50% black mixed in.
Slider right: 50% whitemixed in.

The default value is in the middle = no black or white mixed in...



In case you wonder

If you're in fact familiar with the HSB colour model, you must be shaking your head in disbelief by now.

In reality / any real graphics program handles the HSB model very differently from the way Trackmania does, but ok, we have to deal with it :&

Contrast

Contrast
Usually the contrast value will determine how far 2 colours are "away" from each other.. the highest colour contrast would be "black"+"white" and the lowest possible contrast would be "identical grey"+ "identical grey".
Slider left: minimum contrast, **Slider right**: maximum contrast.

Just like in the HSB colour model, Trackmania will not really use the possible minimum and maximum, just some devitalised method of creating contrasts...

Red, Green, Blue

Although you're able to manipulate colours with the HSB model above, Trackmania offers you an additional method of **substracting single colour components**.

By default, all values are set to 100% at the right side. Sliding them to the left substracts a colour component.

Example: Sliding all values, R/G/B to the very left means that there are no red,green or blue components in the colours anymore, resulting in a greyshaded colour layout.

In fact, you could've gotten the same result with just sliding the "Saturation" value to the very left...

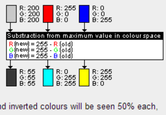
Nevertheless, it's a quick method to give the colour layout a "special note".

Example:
Substracting only "Blue" from default, it will leave your whole colour layout with a yellowish/golden atmosphere...
Substracting both "Red" and "Green" from default, it will leave you with a dark blue, "scary night" atmosphere...

Inverse

Inverting a picture is very similar to creating a *Photo negative*.
All RGB values are substracted from the maximum value in the colour space (which is 255 in RGB)

Slider left: Inverted colours are 0% visible.
Slider right: Inverted colours are 100% visible.



The funny thing is: when the **slider is in the middle**, both, original colours and inverted colours will be seen 50% each, so all visible colours will always be flat grey (R:128, G:128, B:128)

Download the COLOUR TRACK to see the most important colour values at work...

Conclusion:
When beeing used properly FX color can create special effects like:
• Shadowy areas on a track
• Blinding sunlight effects
• Old black/white film
and much more...

Drawbacks:

As mentioned at the beginning of the tutorial, it needs *PC2 shader* and *Postprocessing* activated. Not everybody uses these settings, so be aware of that before you start to base your mediatracker content solely on *FX Color* effects.

Near, Far + Distance

By default, all the colour values affect everything you can see on your screen (except of course, other Mediatracker effects like text,images etc).

The "FX color" effect offers you the possibility to have different colour manipulation values for foreground and background, called "**Near**" and "**Far**" in the value settings.

Attention!

For using different far/near settings, you MUST have **PC3 shader** or higher activated **PLUS** you must insert a FX Blur (Depth or Motion) effect at the same time!

Noone knows, why it's required, but it is! Consider this carefully when using these effects, not too many people have activated these settings in their Trackmania game.

Here you can set the "**Distance**" value, *how far* the "Near" area reaches, **always seen from your camera's perspective.**

You can switch between Near/Far by clicking on it.

The same goes for the "Far" area.
BlendZ describes, how much the different settings for the "Far" area are visible.
Slider left: not visible at all.
Slider right: fully visible.

Download the COLOUR NEAR & FAR TRACK to see this effect at work.
You can set totally different colour manipulation values for the Near & Far area.

This way you could emulate "Fog in the distance" or a "Spotlight on your car" and things like that...

Massive Drawback:
This would be a promising special effect, but the "**Far**" area does not include things like the sky or several textured objects in the background, although you'd expect it to.

On the other hand, the "**Near**" area does infact influence all these elements, which it shouldn't... With this flaw/bug, you can't really create realistic effects...

Conclusion:
Only use different *Near & Far* settings, if you can fully control what the camera sees. This will mostly be the case in Intros or GPS systems...

In addition, Trackmania players must have activated *PC3 shader + Postprocessing* settings, so this effect might make more sense when preparing Replays for Video shootings, rather than using this effect within the game.

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